

INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION
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CITIES USING PARKING METERS

To What extent are cities now using parking meters, how much revenue can be expected, and what information should a city have with regard to the purchasing, installation, and operation of meters?

Cities With Parking Meters. Parking meters are in operation in 491 cities in the United States, according to a survey just made by the International City Managers' Association for the 1946 edition of the Municipal Year Book, and 37 additional cities report plans to make installations this year. This represents a 42 per cent increase since 1942 when 347 cities had parking meters. Thirty-four per cent of the cities over 10,000 population are now using meters. Meters have been most popular in cities in the 100,000 to 250,000 population group, where 69 per cent of the cities have made installations. Other population groups in order of the percentage using parking meters are: 250,000 to 500,000, 61 per cent; 50,000 to 100,000 and 25,000 to 50,000, tied at 45 per cent; over 500,000, 28.6 per cent; 10,000 to 25,000, 24.4 per cent; and 5,000 to 10,000, 9.3 per cent. Thirty-one cities which at one time had meters have had them removed. Some cities which have had meters for approximately 10 years are purchasing new meters. For example, Kansas City, Missouri, is purchasing 1,000 new meters to replace those purchased in 1936, and Flint, Michigan, is buying 1,300 new meters to replace 700 installed in 1939 and to add another 600 in the downtown and outlying areas.

In addition to the 491 cities with meters, 37 cities reporting that arrangements have been made for installation in 1946 are: Eureka and San Francisco, California; Belle Glade, Ocala, Palatka, Fort Pierce, and Pensacola, Florida; Colorado Springs and Pueblo, Colorado; Albany, Georgia; Indianapolis, Indiana; Ottumwa, Iowa, Maysville, Kentucky; Laurel, Mississippi, Ann Arbor and Mt. Pleasant, Michigan; St. Paul, Minnesota; Binghamton, New York; Bismarck and Grand Forks, North Dakota; Berea, Chillicothe, Logan, Nelsonville, and Fort Clinton, Ohio; Chickasha, Oklahoma; Oregon City, Pendleton, and Albany, Oregon; East Stroudsburg, Mt. Union, Conshohocken, and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Odessa and Taylor, Texas; and Covington and Dunbar, Virginia. In Wichita, Kansas, the city council recently decided to install 1,600 parking meters in the downtown shopping district.

Types of Meters. Two types of meters are in use. A total of 246 cities have automatic meters only, 214 cities have manual meters only, and 20 have both. The meters in 76 of the 362 cities over 10,000 population take nickels only, in 45 cities some of the meters take nickels only, and in 189 cities none take nickels only. This information is not available for 52 cities. It is estimated on the basis of 1942 data that approximately one-fourth of the cities have some penny meters, but the great majority of meters in most cities take nickels and pennies.

With regard to the make of meters used, 150 cities report that Dual meters are used, 123 cities have Miller meters, 51 cities Mark-Time, 46 Mi-Co, 38 Karpark, 12 Park-O-Graf, 5 Parkrite, 5 Standard, 2 Apex, and 29

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cities have more than one make of meter. Of the 123 cities with Miller meters, 50 have populations below 10,000. Some meter companies apparently went out of business during the war but there are seven known manufacturers.

The names and addresses of the known manufacturers of parking meters are: Dual Parking Meter Company, Harter Bank Building, Canton 2, Ohio; Duncan Meter Corporation, 1500 South Western Avenue, Chicago (Miller meters); International Meters, Inc., 41 East 42 Street, New York; Karpark Corporation, McMillan at Laredo, Cincinnati 6; Magee-Hall Park-O-Meter Company, Commerce Exchange Building, Oklahoma City 2; Mi-Co Meter Company, 231 Court Street, Covington, Kentucky; and M. H. Rhodes, Inc., 30 Bartholomew Street, Hartford 6, Connecticut.

Revenue From Meters. A total of 323 cities reported information on meter revenues. In the month of October, 1945, these cities collected a gross revenue of \$1,008,293 from the 149,736 meters operating, or \$6.73 per meter. The highest average revenue per meter was \$8.43 for the 36 reporting cities between 50,000 and 100,000 population, and the lowest revenue per meter was \$4.46 for 14 cities of less than 5,000 population. Cities between 5,000 and 10,000 collected \$6.58 per meter; between 10,000 and 25,000, \$6.06; between 25,000 and 50,000, \$5.80; and between 100,000 and 250,000, \$6.97. City officials were requested to report the gross revenue before deducting any payments to meter companies because meter contracts usually provide for payment to the manufacturer of a certain percentage of the revenue until the purchase price is paid. Jackson, Michigan, installed 550 in October, 1945, and collections have averaged \$1,070 per week. Harrisburg, Virginia, collected \$11,733 in 1945 as compared with \$7,162 for the previous year--city officials indicating that the increase was due mainly to the fact that a maintenance man kept the meters in proper running condition in 1945.

Of the 277 cities over 10,000 reporting on the disposition of parking meter revenues, 225 cities, or 81 per cent, credit the money to the general fund; 39 cities, or 14 per cent, use meter revenues for traffic improvements; seven cities, or 3 per cent, use such revenues to provide off-street parking facilities; and the six remaining cities, or 2 per cent, report that part goes to the general fund and part for traffic improvements.

More Information. It is not possible in this brief report to cover the various phases involved in the purchasing, installation, and handling of meters once they are installed. Subscribers to MIS may secure on request loan copies of reports summarizing the experience of cities with parking meters. Also available to subscribing cities on request to MIS are specifications used by cities in purchasing meters; a summary of a report on tests conducted by Kansas City Missouri, on five makes of parking meters; an analysis of bids recently received by several cities; a sample ordinance providing for the installation, regulation, and control of meters; information on the cost of operation and on collection problems. Individual city data on the number of meters installed in each city having such meters in February, 1946, together with type of meters, year installed, make of meters, and revenue, will be contained in the 1946 edition of The Municipal Year Book to be published in June by International City Managers' Association.